

THE
L I F E
O F
Peter Michael Lafitte:
WITH AN
ACCOUNT
O F H I S
CONVERSION, TRIALS, &c.

Written by Himself.

*Jesus saith unto him, go home to thy Friends, and
tell them, how great Things the Lord hath done
for thee, and hath had Compassion on thee,
Mark v. 19.*



L O N D O N:
Printed by JOHN LEWIS in Bartholomew-Classe.
MDCCXLIV.

PREFACE to the READER.

I Have read the following Pages, and believe the publishing this simple Account, of the Work of God upon the Author's Heart, may be bless'd to some of his poor Brethren (who are yet in their Sins) to awaken them, and to bring them to the same Happiness which he now enjoys in believing on the Lord Jesus. I pray him to sprinkle it with his Blood, and bid it, go and prosper to accomplish the Thing for which it was sent. I am

Yours, (friendly Reader,)

IN CHRIST JESUS,

John Cennick.





THE
L I F E
O F
Peter Michael Lafitte.



WAS born of Protestant Parents in the Isle of Re' near Rochelle in France, and by them was taught a few of the Calvinistical Principles, and learned some Prayers and Psalms, &c. tho' in my Heart did I not know true Religion, but was prone to all Manner of Wickedness.

I was baptized in the *Romish* Church, and was obliged at Times to go to hear Mass against my Will, having naturally entertain'd an Aversion to Popery.

Once I remember as I was with my Play-Fellows at a Church Door, the Bell rang at the Elevation of the Host, at which they kneel'd down, and would have had me, but I (knowing it was Sin) would not, but said, *do you think I will kneel down to that God which is made of Dough?* But from that Time till I left France I was never free from the Fear of being hang'd or burn'd for it.

When I heard often what great Liberty the Protestants had in Religion in *Holland* and *England*, from the Time I was eight Years old, I had it in my Heart to desire to go out of France, into one of these Countries; and as this Desire increas'd, I told it to my Parents, and besought them to suffer me to go, who (after they had long denied me) gave me their Consent, and to my Surprize, my Mother put into my Hands ten Crowns to bear my Charges. The Time being come in which I thought to embark for England, both her and

my Father, with two of my Brothers, and three Sisters, came in a little Boat to bid me adieu, which they did with many Tears, and then we parted.

As I was passing by Water to the Ship, one who knew me (supposing that I was making my Escape to *England*) spake to the Captain in *English*, and threat'ned him if he carried me away (it not being permitted for any one to be carried out of *France* in such a Way without a Pass-port). The Captain being therefore afraid, set me on Shore, and hastened on board his Vessel; and, as soon as possible, he loos'd Anchor, and set sail leaving me behind. I was but a little discourag'd at this, tho' my Linnen, Cloaths, and other Necessaries were within his Ship, and I had but small room to think I ever should get any of them again. About three Days (after I had made strict Enquiries) I lighted on another Ship, and in about eleven Days arriv'd safe at *Falmouth*. Here I happened to put up in an Inn, the Keepers of which were acquainted with a Cousin of mine at *Plymouth*, whither I was going, who treated me kindly for her sake, and would take nothing of me. So did the Lord prosper unworthy me.

After some Days waiting for the Wind, I came to *Plymouth*, my Cousin there received me with much Affection, and Love, and began to ask me serious Questions about the Hope that was in me; and, if I were a Protestant? and how I came from *France*, &c? To which I gave Answers which seemingly satisfied her. The Sunday after I came thither, she had me to a *French* Church, where I was agreeably surpriz'd to see so many Protestants worshipping God together in so publick a Manner (I having never seen any publick Worship before except in the Church of *Rome*) I was the more glad also to hear the Minister preach such Doctrine, which I had never heard before, but from my Parents privately. Thus I continued in *Plymouth* about three Months, when my Cousin persuaded me to go to *London*, and put myself an Apprentice, and having told me how to do it, I left her and went. I was brought safe to *London*, thro' the Providence of our Saviour, and was directed to a Gentlewoman whom I had known in my own Country, who got me placed as an Apprentice to one of her Acquaintance, with whom I was greatly built up in the Way of outward Religion (for other I then knew not) all my time.

With the Appearance of Religion that was in me while in *France*, I was still fond of Plays, Songs, &c. believing I was a very good Christian, if I said my Prayers, and repeated my Catechism, was obedient to my Father and Mother, &c. I generally thought it hard of my Parents, when they confined me

me to read and pray on *Sundays*, for on those Days I used to take my Pleasure, and employ it as others did, in playing at Cards, Skettles, Billiards, Dances, profane Singing, and other such Abominations, having little or no Remorse of Conscience for doing so, because every body else did it.

But when I was come into *England*, I grew more serious, and began to keep the *Sunday* strict, and to go to Church, and to read and pray more than I had done before. I also desired my Master to instruct me to prepare for the Sacrament, and (being told by him I might instruct myself by learning the Catechism, which would teach me what I ought to believe) I began to learn Mr. *Drelincourt's* Catechism, and some Forms of Prayer, which I thought would be suitable for me when I receiv'd it. Then I went to a Minister to be examin'd: Who having asked me a few Questions about my Faith, admitted me to the Lord's Table. Before I went I was half a Year in preparing myself, and yet after all my Preparations, I was convinced I lacked somewhat to perfect it, but did not know what. I thought I was not holy enough, neither worthy, and so I fasted and prayed often, and spent many Days in lamenting, and weeping for my Sins, and then made myself easy, and thought God would not require more of me. I thought Faith in Christ, was a necessary Qualification, but this I thought I had been eminent in from my Infancy, and so mistook Opinion for Faith.

After I had been at the Sacrament, I began to keep Company again, and ran into the World; and the Lusts of the Flesh, and the Love of Pleasure which before reign'd in me, now redoubled their Power in my Heart, and I continually embraced all their impure Flames with Delight.

I should have fallen into all outward Sins of Concupiscence, and Uncleaness, but I fear'd by so doing, I should lose my good Name which I had, and my Reputation which I was extremely fond of: I being still look'd upon as a very honest religious young Man. Sometimes also I was restrain'd from Sin, by the Dread and Fear of those Punishments God threatens Whoremongers and Adulterers with. These were Bridles for my Lusts, and by means of which I was preserv'd from the Contagion of Lust often, tho' my Heart was full of evil Desires and Inclinations with Whoredoms and Adulteries continually.

For all this, if I had heard of any poor Creature, who had fallen and lived in the Sight of the World in those Sins, far from bewailing and lamenting their Unhappiness, and sad Condition, I hated, and spoke hardly of them, seeking thus to keep
up

up the Esteem People had of me.

However, my Religion sunk more and more, and as some times I made some Reflections, I found my House going to Ruin, but when the Winds which blew against it were still and calm, I quickly contented and encouraged myself to go on.

My Wife, who had married me on Account of my Religion, and good Name, when she saw my Practice not answer my Character, wonder'd greatly, and reprimanded me sometimes on that Account, tho' she knew not the half of my Sins or Wickednesses. Her Words made Wounds in my Conscience for a Time, and put me upon seeking to preserve my Character, but the Wounds were soon heal'd; and thro' the Hatred I conceived against mine Enemies, and the excessive Love I had for the World, I was put entirely out of the Practice of any Duty of Piety or Religion; and I gave myself to drinking, to frequent Ale-houses, to playing at Cards, &c. the Sunday I employ'd in walking, visiting my Companions, going to breakfast sometimes at one, and sometimes at another Ale-house; after the Course of this World.

I remark at this time that all my Undertakings were crossed, some by one sudden Accident, and sometimes by another, and all Things turn'd to my Disadvantage. My Wife imputed all to my Neglect of Religion, and ceas'd not to reproach me concerning this Matter, tho' she herself had no more true Religion than myself, only thro' the restraining Grace of God, she was kept from those Sins that I fell into; she was ignorant of the Knowledge of *Christ*, and believed as others, that if we did our Duty we should be saved, and that if we did all we could, *Christ* would do the rest.

After all these Things, the unruly and impure Desires of my adulterous Heart, tempted me continually to seek for the Company of debauch'd Women; I was forced sometimes to offer Violence to that Passion in striving to resist it. But I, a poor sinful miserable Creature, a Slave to the Devil and his cruel Tyranny, was oftentimes mad in pursuing the natural Bent of my sinful Heart, but could not find any favourable Opportunity to satisfy that cursed Passion. Oftentimes I was hinder'd for want of Money, sometime for fear of being discover'd to the Eyes of the World, or for fear of the Punishment God inflicts in this World upon Sinners who are abandoned to such an Excess, or for fear of breaking the Promises of Fidelity I had made to my Wife, or for fear of the Torments of Hell, appointed for such Sinners; all these Things were as so many Bridles, which kept in that brutish Passion, and hinder'd me from falling into that Crime externally; but these

these Fears did not keep me from it internally, and from looking upon Women to lust after them, so committing it in my Heart. Sometimes I had terrible Fears in my Soul, for those Words of the holy Scripture, "That Whoremongers and Adulterers God shall judge," sounded often in mine Ears. But alas, the Fear of Hell could not purify my Heart, nor make it hate, that which it naturally loves, namely Sin.

The Master whom I work'd for, propos'd to me, that if I would go and live in the Country, he would furnish me with Means, whereby I might be establish'd in the World in an honourable Manner; after I had made some Reflexions on the Offers and Advantages that he propos'd, I accepted them very willingly, looking upon them as very advantageous, and even infallibly so. I likewise thought that in leaving *London*, I should get rid of my evil and vicious Inclinations; in that I should be far from the Temptations which favour'd them. Therefore I was wholly resolv'd to accept the Offer that was made me, and after having agreed with my Wife, and settled my Affairs in *London*, which I did with much Difficulty and Trouble, we undertook our Journey; but before we departed, my Wife said to me often, that she hop'd I should be more Religious where I was going, than I was then; and that if I would have God to bless my Undertakings, I must have good Rules in my House, I must pray to God in my Family, read the Word of God, and partake of the holy Sacrament at every Opportunity, and not fail going to Church twice every *Sunday*; which I promis'd her very willingly, and so much the more, because I had propos'd it to myself. For until then both she and I built our Hopes on External Duties, and the Appearances of Religion: Such was the Foundation on which we built our House both Spiritual and Temporal. At last, after a long and very dangerous Voyage by Sea, we arriv'd at *Exeter*, which was the Place where we intended to go; Hindrances and Disappointments, and oftentimes a Fear of perishing during the said Voyage, seem'd to presage the Misfortunes which would attend us when we came ashore: And the Changes and Disappointments that we had in our new Settlement, was not the least Thing, that caus'd a great Disquietude and Uneasiness in our Minds. After I had been in the Country some Weeks, I perceiv'd that the Inhabitants were very exact in going to Church, and practising with great Diligence the external Acts of Religion, especially among the *French*, which pleas'd me very well, and being willing to
acquit

acquit myself of the Promises I had made my Wife, and what I had propos'd to myself, I endeavour'd to imitate them; thinking likewise that such was the Duty of a Christian, and that I had a Soul to be saved as well as they. After I had been there a little Time, I found these *French* People; notwithstanding all their Form and Appearance of Religion; did not leave off loving the World, and the Things of the World, which agreed well with my Inclinations. Now, the Devil, who is not at a Loss for Artifices and Means to catch a poor Creature in his Net, did not fail to lay Snares for me; for having given a loose to Drinking, it was a Means to make me fall into other Sins, insomuch that he reign'd in me with more Power than ever, and I was led Captive by him at his Will. I grew still more wicked, and became a Profaner of the Sabbath, and was given up to swearing more than in any other Time of my Life: I durst not then read the Word of God, finding it too severe. My Conscience told me that I was an Enemy to God, and that God was my Enemy, that his Yoke was a heavy Burden, and his holy Law seem'd to me too hard: And the little Sight I had from time to time of the State of my poor Soul, made me to tremble with Fear, and my Conscience was so fill'd with a Sense of the Punishment due to my Sins, that I felt, in some Measure, the Pains of Hell, and was troubled in my Mind Day and Night, with terrible Apprehensions and fearful Dreams, which broke my Rest and overwhelm'd my poor Soul. Oftentimes I strove to shake off this Burden, and to stifle this Remorse of Conscience, as much as possible, sometimes by imagining that all my Fears were without Foundation, and that God being infinitely merciful, would have Compassion on me: Sometimes I sought to dissipate my Fears, by keeping Company with some good People of the World: Sometimes also I imagined, that all these Apprehensions proceeded from the Weakness of my Mind, for this was the Judgment I once form'd of those whom I heard say, were in Distress of Soul; or troubled in Mind, but when I could get no Ease, I made God and myself, Promise upon Promise, and Protestation upon Protestation, to live better for the Time to come; but alas, (very far from becoming better,) I grew worse every Day, and Sin reign'd in me with all its Power, especially the Sin of Concupiscence, which seemingly resolv'd to destroy me eternally; and because God had given me a Wife, invested with Chastity, who hinder'd me often from indulging my wicked Desires, I hated her so much, that I look'd upon her continually
with

with the highest Disdain, and have often told her, that I took her to be the Author and Cause of my eternal Damnation; and tho' she did all that was in her Power besides to please me, nothing was capable of breaking the Hardness of my Heart, or of lessening the Hatred I had for her; but, on the contrary, the more she sought to please me, the more my Heart was incens'd against her: Nay, I have often with'd and said in my Heart, that I had rather she was a common Harlot, than to have so much Chastity. The Attempts I made to overcome my evil Inclinations is incredible, but alas, all in vain. And if it happen'd that I conquer'd them for some Days, I was afterwards a double Slave to their Tyranny, which caused me most terrible and dreadful Frights. Often when I went to lie down, I shook like the Leaves of a Tree in tempestuous Weather, and when I have sat at the Bed's Feet, I durst not look either to the right Hand or to the left. Sometimes I had a Mind to look if the Chamber Window was shut, but I had no Power; for I was afraid, that if it had been open, the Devil would have come, and taken me alive into Hell. I look'd upon God as my severe Judge, ready to shoot at me the Arrows of his Vengeance, and this made me sometimes curse the Day of my Birth. I hated myself; and could take no Pleasure in any Thing I did. I likewise hated my Friends and Enemies, nothing could afford me any Contentment or Satisfaction: My Heart and Soul was like the Sea tossed with Winds and Tempests, thus was I brought under sore Convictions. Alas, the merciful Hand of God was upon me, and I knew nothing of it; he wounded me, but I endeavour'd to heal myself; he overthrew me in the World, but his everlasting Arms were underneath me. He shewed me what a cursed Nature I was of, and I thought it was to destroy me; he made me poor, but I knew not that it was to enrich me; he humbled me, but I did not know it was to exalt me; he broke my Heart, but I knew not that he would take Possession of it; he made me sorrowful, but I knew not that he would make me rejoice; he encompass'd me with Darknes, but I knew not that the Sun of Righteousness would arise upon me; he made me see how much his Wrath is to be feared, but he hid his Love from me, he prepar'd the Ground of my Heart, but I knew not that he would plant the Seeds of Life and eternal Happiness there; I was quite ignorant of the Knowledge of Salvation by *Jesus Christ*, and of a living Faith, which is the Gift of God, and which unites us to *Jesus Christ* with an everlasting Union: and yet notwithstanding all the Troubles and Fears of God's

B

Wrath,

Wrath, I was not convinced I was an Unbeliever. I should have been greatly affronted, and have thought such a Person to be Lunatic, and out of his Senses; that would have said I was in this sad and lamentable State; I sometimes pray'd for my Conversion, tho' I scarce knew what it meant; yet I felt very lively that I wanted something, but indeed I knew not what. A little Time after the Lord, in the Course of his Providence, permitted, that I, and all my Family was ordered to return to *London*; when I receiv'd the News, I was very sorry, because it appear'd much to my Disadvantage; however, constrain'd by Necessity, I must obey the Order, and in a little Time, I endeavour'd to make my Way for *London* by Land, because it was necessary for me to go first; my Wife remain'd there sometime after me, being kept by a long Sickness and contrary Wind, for she was to come by Sea. I was no sooner arrived at *London*, but the Temptations which formerly had delighted my Soul, offer'd themselves afresh to my Eyes and Heart; they would have been willingly embrac'd, but by some restraining Grace which work'd then in me with more Vivacity, I was often freed therefrom.

Being then absent from my Wife, and convinced how I had slighted and behaved ill to her, the Lord humbled me much, and put into my Heart, instead of the Contempt which I had for her, an Esteem and Value, which afterwards appear'd to be true; for since the Time that God carried me from her, until the Time that it pleas'd him to bring me to his clear Knowledge, I had much Tenderness and Kindness for her. One Night as I lay in my Bed, I dreamt a Dream, uncommon and too long to relate here: I thought the Signification of my Dream was, that I should live no longer than three Years: I dreamt the same Dream three Nights together, and each Time I dreamt the same, it created in my Heart a great Fear, and likewise caused a Resolution to renew my Life, and change my Manners, thinking it was Time for me to think of Death, and prepare myself for it; and during a Month of the Time, there appear'd in the Behaviour of my Life, Signs of a true Reformation: But after I had quitted the Ale-house, Gaming, &c. (the Love of these Things not being rooted out of my Heart) I was again captivated by them, but playing at Cards I refused, by reason of its breaking in upon my time: I strove against other Sins also, but not being able to overcome, I was forced to stifle the Convictions, and Remorses of Conscience that these criminal Pleasures caused me.

After

After all these Things finding myself weary with my Calling, which was a Weaver, as well because it was disagreeable to my Health, as because of the little Success that I had in it, I happen'd in the Company of a certain Person, who said she had great Interest in, and was very much esteem'd by the Merchants of this great City; and told me if I was willing, she could get me a Place with one of them, which (said she) would be more advantageous and honourable than to work at the Trade of a Weaver. I accepted very gladly this Offer. She was by Profession a Fortune-Teller, and upon my consenting to leave my Trade, she told me to turn three Dishes of Tea, and then she would tell me assuredly whether I could succeed or no. The Thing being done, she told me that she would dare lay her Life, I should get my Design. I giving Credit to her Words, did my utmost Endeavour to seek Means: So easy could I be advis'd by the Devil; but first of all, I look'd to myself and reflected whether I was capable of being a Book-Keeper; but finding I was not, I doubted much of accomplishing that which she had told me of; and when I had told her thereof, she advis'd me to be with a Master, who could instruct me in what I wanted, to make me fit for it, which I did in a few Days; and about seven Months after, when I had lost all Hopes of finding any Places, it pleas'd the Lord to cause me to find one. The Means that he was pleas'd to make use of to that End, appear'd to be very weak in themselves, but every Thing, when the Work is of God, will prove effectual, God having prosper'd the Means that I had furnish'd myself with, I got the Place of a Clerk to a Merchant of this City, without any Difficulty. When I had been about three Months in the said Place, Mr. *Whitefield* was come up to *London*. And at *Easter*, in the Year 1741, my Wife having a Design to take a little Walk into *Moor-Fields*, with an intent to see some Shews in the Booths, ask'd one of her Aunts, and her first Cousin, to let her have their Company; but instead of going to see the Shews, God carried them to hear Mr. *Whitefield*; In the Evening I came home, and found my Wife, her Aunt and Cousin, just come home too, very wet, for it had rain'd that Evening whilst Mr. *Whitefield* was preaching; my Wife quickly said to me, I have been, I believe, to hear an Angel preach. O, said she, my dear Friend, these Things of the World I renounce, its Pleasures and Vanities: O, I renounce all the Pride of this World; and earnestly desired me to go to hear him the morrow Morning. This surpriz'd me much,

for I knew that her Inclinations were once contrary to what she then told me. I promised her that I would go. I went the next Day to hear him, and his Sermon seem'd to me very fine, and appear'd to be very agreeable to the holy Scriptures, according to the Knowledge I then had, which consisted but in the Letter only, being then ignorant of all its Power. I went in the Evening of the same Day again to hear him, and the Day after both Morning and Evening; and the next Day Morning and at Night, I took much Pleasure and Delight in hearing him, and I found sometimes great Comfort under his Ministry, and sometimes it seem'd as if the Word pierc'd through my very Heart. Now, as I had the Conveniency of hearing him twice every Day almost, without doing Wrong either to my Master, or myself, I did not let slip the Opportunity, and I found myself more and more affected under his Ministry; and I likewise saw that he was more and more agreeable to the Word of God; and I heard him with so much Affection, Fervour and Zeal, that it appear'd to me as if I digested some Words that he spake, especially when he invited poor Sinners, who were loaded with the Weight of their Sins, and groan'd under an Apprehension of God's Wrath, and were weary and heavy laden, to come to *Jesus Christ*, to believe in him, and put all their Confidence in the infinite Merit of his precious Blood which he shed on the Cross; and besought them for *Christ's* Sake to be reconciled to God, assuring them with so holy and stedfast Boldness, that God would receive them into his Favour, and that it was his Will that they should believe in *Jesus Christ*, that they should not doubt of receiving him by Faith, for their *Saviour* and *Redeemer*, to acknowledge him as one who has paid all their Debts, satisfied divine Justice for them, and made their Peace with God; that they were to believe it from their Heart, and rejoice in Believing, to give Praise and Thanksgivings to God for it. All these Things were at certain Times, more sweet to my Soul than the Honey-Comb in the Mouth. And, on the other hand, when he said, that whosoever did not believe those Things above mentioned, each for himself in particular, was an Unbeliever, and consequently already condemn'd by *Jesus Christ* himself, and that the Wrath of God abides upon him; and added, that Faith was a Gift of God, and that no one could get it of himself, or by his own Power, and that they that believed in *Christ*, had the Witness in themselves, and that none can believe that *Jesus* is the *Christ*, but by the *Holy Ghost*; and that they who believed in *Christ*, overcome
the

the World, that they are new Creatures, that they walk no more after the Flesh, but after the Spirit; that they feel internally in their Hearts, that their Peace is made with God; that they feel in themselves the divine Influences of the Holy Spirit, filling them with Joy and Consolation, and that they can cry *Abba* Father, that is to say, that they experience inwardly in themselves that they are passed from Death to Life, that they can say with *St. Paul*, *I know in whom I have believed*; and again, that there is now no Condemnation to them. And with holy *Job*, *I know that my Redeemer liveth*. All these Things made me look into myself, who was clearly convinced I knew not these Things, nor the Marks of the Love of God; nevertheless the Lord, who drew me then to him as by Cords of Love, suffer'd me not to fall into great Fear; and as God made me see that all these Things were very agreeable to his holy Word, he kept me likewise from resisting and contradicting them; but by the Blessing of God it was a very powerful Motive, for me to go and cast myself at the Throne of his Grace, but with a humble Confidence. I hoped that the Lord would grant me these great Favours, on the only Account of his Goodness and Kindness in *Christ*, in the Time of his good Pleasure. Now, as the Lord inclined my Heart more and more to follow *Mr. Whitefield's* Preaching, in a little Time, thro' his Ministry, was wrought in me a great Reformation; I began then again to have good Rules in my Family, there was nothing but Reading, Prayer, Meditation on the Word of God, &c. but having so done, I began to rest on, and sought still to be justified by the Works of the Law.

On *Saturday* Evenings, I ceas'd not to frequent the Ale-house, as I had accustomed to do, with People very civil and honest in the World, and enjoy'd their Company with Pleasure, and drank, and play'd at Cards a little, sung some Songs, or discours'd of the Affairs of the Times; I could not absent myself thence, my Heart was yet there, and because I loved it, I persuaded myself there was no Evil in it.

Now, my Wife, on whom the Work of God was more advanced than in me, seemed troubled at my so doing, sigh'd often in her self, and sometimes told me that I offended God in doing thus; but I was not yet convinced of it, and I produc'd this for my Defence, that the Company with whom I went, were very honest People, and that I did not believe, I did any harm in going with them.

Tho' I thus pleaded for Sin, I continued twice every Day going to hear the Word of God preach'd, and I took
so

so much Pleasure in hearing it, that I could have willingly pass'd Days and Nights therein, entirely without Weariness.

Now the Devil perceiving that he was like to lose his Prey, began to tempt me, that Mr. *Whitefield* was one of the false Prophets, which the Scripture makes mention of, which would come in the last Days. I could not receive this in my Heart, but the Thoughts became a very heavy Burden to me, which I pray'd to be delivered from. These Temptations, which lasted near a Month, did not hinder me from continually following him, tho' the Devil made me reason with myself on this Matter; and I said, if it was true that this Man was such, then I should be mock'd and despis'd of all those who knew me, because they would say, that I follow'd an Enchanter, and a false Prophet; but with other Thoughts I resisted those, being held up by the Grace and infinite Goodness of God, which enlightened the Eyes of my Understanding, and made me capable to receive and believe in some Measure, the Truth of all that he preach'd.

I was resolv'd to continue following him, however, as often as I could, because he was faithful in declaring the Counsel and Will of God, agreeable to that which he hath reveal'd to us in his holy Word. As soon as I was delivered from that Temptation, I was expos'd to another much more dangerous.

The Tempter endeavour'd to persuade me, that all the holy Scripture was but a Fable, and an Invention, and Opinion of Men, only compos'd to keep them bridled and in Subjection, but that in the Bottom there was nothing true; that there was no God: But the Lord bore me up inwardly against the fiery Darts of this roaring Lion, his Grace assisting me, I strove against him: Nevertheless they were very great and heavy Burdens upon my Soul, and at certain Times I seem'd to fall under its Weight. These Thoughts fill'd me with Shame and Confusion. I trembled in myself, condemning and hating myself that I was so wicked, as to conceive such Thoughts in my Heart, and when I thought to go and prostrate myself before the Throne of Grace, to offer to God my Requests and Supplications, he made all the Attempts he could to hinder me; perswading me, that by reason of these Thoughts above written, and many others impure, profane, and blasphemous, which proceeded all from the impure Stream, that I had sinned against

against the *Holy Ghost*, and that it was in vain for me to ask for Pardon.

But the Lord who is near to those who are of a contrite Heart, after having been a little afflicted, came to my Deliverance.

On *Whitsunday*, Mr. *Whitefield* preach'd in the Morning in *Moor-Fields*, and proved with Demonstration of the Spirit and with Power, the very great and glorious Privileges of true Christians, those who are indeed the Children of God, saying, that *Jesus Christ* had acquitted them by his Merits, and exhorted them to be steadfast in the Faith, fighting against the Malice of the Devil, the World and the Flesh. I received then the Word not in the Letter only, but with the Power of God, I felt in my Soul, a Joy, Peace and Consolation, unspeakable and full of Glory.

The same Day at Evening he preach'd at *Kennington Common*, where I went likewise to hear him, he took his Text in *Isaiab*, Chap. lxi. 1. 2. "The Spirit of the Lord
"God is upon me, because the Lord hath anointed me to
"preach good Tidings to the Meek; he hath sent me to
"bind up the broken hearted, to proclaim Liberty to the
"Captives, and the opening of the Prison to them that
"are bound; to proclaim the acceptable Year of the Lord,
"and the Day of Vengeance of our God; to comfort all that
"mourn:" Whilst he was preaching, I was assured to the Praise and Glory of God, who is infinite in Mercy and Compassion, who was pleas'd to make his Grace to abound, where Sin had abounded, that I felt my Soul fed with the sacred Bread of Life, and I perceived that it work'd in my Soul the same Effect, that natural Bread does in my Body, which is to nourish and strengthen it.

My Heart was then set on Fire (as it were) with a divine Flame; and my Soul enjoy'd perfect and compleat Joy; I experienced so strongly the Love of God to me, that from a Sense of his Love my Heart burnt within me; but like the Disciples who went travelling to *Emmaus*, the Veil was yet in some measure on my Eyes; for though feeling in my Heart that divine Goodness and almighty Power of my sweet and loving *Saviour*, converting and attracting my Heart to him, I did not see that it was he alone that spoke Peace to my Soul.

The Sermon being ended, I returned to my House, accompanied with one of my intimate Friends. This Man wanted to discourse about worldly Matters, but my Heart
being

being then fixt in deep Meditation, and my Soul enjoying that Peace that passeth all Understanding, his Discourse seemed to me as a Thief, who would rob me of the Peace, Joy, and Tranquillity which my Soul was filled with; so that I could give no Attention to his Discourse; being come to my House, I enjoy'd continually the same Felicity, which far from lessening, increased more and more. And my Soul overflowing almost with the Oil of Joy and Consolations of the Holy Spirit, the Lord opened my Mouth, and I said to my Mother, who was then with me, O my dear Mother, if the holy Word of God did not tell us that the Joys, Consolations, and Pleasure, that the blessed and glorified Saints enjoy in Heaven, was more than the Heart of Man could ever sufficiently comprehend or conceive; I should believe that it could not surpass that which I feel now in my Soul.

In the Evening I went to Bed; being constrained by the Sense of God's Love, I said to my Wife; O my dear Friend, what a glorious Thing it is to be a Child of God; and what more increased my Joy, was, that I felt at the same time what an unworthy, perverse, rebellious Sinher, and cursed Creature I was in myself. I feel (said I) in myself, that I deserve rather to be swallow'd up by God's Justice as a Rebel, by reason of the infinite Number of my Sins, and continual Transgressions against my God, my Creator, and my *Saviour*, than to be thus crown'd with his Favours, and to enjoy the glorious Privileges of his dear Children. I went to sleep afterwards, my Heart and all the Faculties of my Soul being fill'd with the Presence of God.

In the Morning when I awaked, the Lord was still with me, and while I was at the preaching, the Lord gave me Strength and Power to hear to my Soul's Health; when the Sermon was ended, I returned to my common Business; being come into the Counting-House, I shut the Door upon me, and falling upon my Knees, fill'd with holy Admiration and Confidence in God, I offered my Requests and Supplications to him, laying open to him my Wants, according as his Spirit of Grace gave me to pray.

I afterwards read in a Book called the Practice of Piety, I read the Chapter which treats of the Happiness of the Children of God here on Earth, and their Felicity and Glorification in Heaven; the Lord strengthening then the Hand of my Faith, I by it embraced my sweet *Saviour*,
and

and Redeemer, and I experienced that I had very close and intimate Communion with him.

Then the *Holy Ghost* opening the Eyes of my Mind, made me see that *Christ* had died in my stead, that his sacred Blood had pay'd all my Debts, blotted out all my Sins, that I was a Child of the living God, and he gave me to believe from my Heart, and to receive with Assurance of Faith, a Foretaste of the Glory and Happiness which the glorified Saints enjoy in Heaven, contemplating with Joy on the Face of God in Righteousness and Glory, and the supreme Majesty of their divine *Saviour*, formerly nail'd to the accursed Tree, and expiring and dying there-upon, but now living for ever and ever, sitting at the Right Hand of the Majesty of God, blessed for ever. *Amen.* I had a full Assurance, that *Christ* died for me; and my Soul was transported on the Wings of divine Love, and filled with deep Humility, and exalted and blessed the Mercy of an infinitely loving *Saviour* and Redeemer. The Witness of the *Holy Spirit* was then so powerful in me, that I was as assured of my eternal Salvation in *Jesus Christ*, as I was assured of his eternal Divinity, which I had felt the Virtue and Power of, in saving to the utmost me who came to God by him.

Some Days after in the Morning, after I had awaked out of my Sleep, and lifting up my Heart to the Lord, I receiv'd that glorious Salutation from him, who inhabits Eternity, and who dwells with him who is of a humble and contrite Spirit, and who trembles at his Word, *I have loved thee with an everlasting Love.*

O well beloved Reader, or Hearer of the present Account, Words, Thoughts and Language, does here fail me, to express the Joy and Gladness, the divine Transports and Admiration of the Light and infinitely excellent Glory, which overflowed my Soul. O that I had the Tongue of a Seraphim, the Love of Angels, and the Zeal of *David*, to bless and adore the Author of my Salvation, and the God of my Hope. O blessed *Jesus*, divine *Emanuel*, thou *Saviour*, who art nothing but Love, thy Right Hand has been powerful, thou art surely and indeed the Friend of Sinners, and thou takest no Pleasure in their Death, but rather that they should turn to thee and live. My Soul shall proclaim thy Goodness and glorious Fame, thou art the only *Saviour*, and there is none
C other.

other. I will tell that in thy Blood there is full Remission of Sins. I will declare to my sinful Brethren, Come and see how good the Lord is. I will say to my sinful Sisters, Come and see, look, and contemplate on this crucified Redeemer: View him by Faith nailed upon a Cross, bor'd Hand and Foot, and opening his pierced Side. I will tell Sinners, Come and see, view and contemplate, be not faithless, but believing; only believe, and thou shalt surely live. Seest thou not the Way to go to the Father? The Cherubims do no more surround the Tree of Life with their flaming Swords, thou mayst now look within the Vail, and see into the Holy of Holies; thou mayst now approach the Tree of Life, and eat the Fruit thereof, and live for ever.

These Joys and Gladness continued in my Soul for seven Weeks together, and I enjoy'd the Presence of *Christ*, my sweet Saviour, and had very intimate Communion with him, and with an Holy Humility and Confidence in his Love towards me, I convers'd with him by Faith as a Man does with his intimate Friend. So that I could say with the Spouse in the *Canticles*, *My Beloved is mine, and I am his*. I say, during seven Weeks, I enjoy'd this glorious Liberty, saving for the Space of twenty-four Hours.

The Devil, envious of my Happiness, began to tempt me to spiritual Pride, by reason of the glorious Privilege I enjoy'd, and attempted to make me glory in myself for it, and to make me believe, that I had attain'd to as great a Measure of Faith, as the Minister that I went to hear had attain'd; but being assisted by the Grace of God, I fought against these proud Thoughts: But the Temptation continuing, and I being off my Watch, I fell thereby, so that these Thoughts found Room in my Heart; but scarce was I lifted up with spiritual Pride, but immediately I felt that the divine Sun, which enlighten'd my Soul, and gave it Life, began to withdraw itself from it, and a thick Darkness encompass'd it afresh. The Grace of God grew weak in me, and I found the divine Heat of my Heart to grow cold and languishing, and I had no Power to praise and exalt my dear Redeemer, with a living Experience, so as I had done before. And I found myself in the same State, that the Spouse in the *Canticles* was in, when she saith, *I sought my Beloved, but I could not find him*, which made my Hopes to abate; for the Devil over-

whelming

whelming me then with Fears, Doubts, and Distrust against my Beloved, I thought his Love was ceas'd towards me, and that he would love me no more; but my poor Soul having thought how sweet the Lord is, could not be content when he was absent: I sought him in Prayer, in Meditation, in Retirement, in his House, but I could not find him; and my Soul sick of Love was ready to die. The Morning of the next Day, after I had fallen under the Temptation abovesaid, before I went to my Business, I went to hear a Sermon; under which my Heart was not at all affected; but contrariwise, it seem'd as if it hardened it.

When I was come to my Master's, I presently began to read in a Book I had brought with me. This Book made mention of the History of many Apostates, who after their Apostacy, had felt very strongly in their Consciences, fearful Remorses; the just Hand of God being upon them with such a Weight, that notwithstanding all the Persuasions and comfortable Discourses and Consolations, that the faithful Servants of God brought to them, to endeavour by that Means to bring them again to put their Confidence in God, by the only Merits of the Death and bloody Passion of our *Lord Jesus Christ*, nothing gave them the least Hopes of Favour; God not being willing to permit it. But they felt more and more the heavy Hand of God upon their guilty Souls; it sunk them into an Abyss of Unbelief and Despair, and they ended their miserable Life in this sad and deplorable State; as just Judgments for their Apostacy.

The more of their History I read, the more it appear'd to me, that I was in the same State, that my Heart was cold as Ice, and hardened more and more, I could find no Love to God, nor Zeal for his Glory; and when I thought to go and fall down at the Throne of Grace, I was hinder'd by I knew not what; and being as I thought intirely left to myself, I could not repent, nor even lift up my Heart unto God: Now, the Tempter, did not fail to make use of my Weakness to augment my Doubts and Fears; so that all the Power I had remaining, was to repent, because I could not repent; to weep, because I could not weep sincerely; to sigh, because I could not sigh from the Bottom of my Heart, with a strong Sense of

my Weakness, Imperfection and Misery; the Eyes of my Mind were greatly darkned, and my Faith so weak, that I knew not what to think of myself.

About one o'Clock in the Afternoon, I went home to Dinner; after I had dined, as I returned to my Master, having my Heart fill'd with Sorrow, it pleased the Lord to manifest himself again to my Soul, in bringing to my Mind that Promise of the Holy Scripture; *I have blessed thee, yea, and I will bless thee.* The Holy Ghost, making Application thereof to my Heart, and rendring me capable of receiving it by Faith in an Instant; all the Doubts and Fears that I had were driven away, and the Darknes which had cover'd my poor Soul, vanish'd quickly, and the divine Sun of Righteousness arising in my Soul, began to warm it with its illuminating Grace, and to bring me afresh into the glorious Liberty of the Children of God. O Lord of Heaven and Earth, thou only art faithful, as for me, I am unfaithful; thou only art unchangeable, I am inconstant; thy Love is always the same, and those whom thou hast loved, thou lovest to the End; but my Love to thee is filled with Changeableness, Slackness, and Coldness: Hasten, O blessed Saviour, the happy Time, when I shall know thee as I am known; and when I shall love thee as I am loved; hasten for thy Name's Sake, O infinitely merciful and loving Saviour, the joyful Time, when all thy Children shall be one in thee, as the Father and thou art one; when we shall all be in God and God in us.

I say, after these happy Days, those that follow'd them (during nine Months) were not less sweet, since I felt almost always in my Soul, the Spirit witnessing with my Spirit, that I was a Child of God: The Difference was only this, that my Transports of Joy and Gladness were not so lively, to speak generally, and I did not feel and enjoy them as at other Times, being interrupted by the internal Knowledge of the Corruption of my Heart, and of the Body of Sin and Death, which was then discover'd to me more than ever before, and which at certain Times I felt so powerfully, that it made me cry out: *O wretched Man that I am, who shall deliver me from this Body of Sin!* It likewise pleased my God, to permit Satan to surround me with divers Temptations; so that I perceived him round me as a roaring Lion, throwing at me his fiery Darts, and venomous Arrows; but when

when my Foot was ready to slip, my God was nigh me, putting in my Hand the Sword of the Spirit, and the Shield of Faith, whereby I quenched all the fiery Darts of Satan; and the Wounds that he had at certain Times made in my Soul, were quickly healed, *Christ* applying to me the true Balm of *Gilead*, the precious Blood of his Heart. And being made whole, I ador'd the sovereign Physician of my Soul; to whom belongs Glory, Thanksgiving and Praise, for ever. *Amen.*

From the Time the *Lord Jesus* made himself known to me to this Day, my God gives me Grace to grow in the Knowledge of him, and of myself, insomuch, that by his divine Light, I am made capable, in some measure, of knowing, seeing, and feeling more and more, the Corruption, Ignorance and Blindness, the Feebleness and natural Misery into which Sin had brought me; and seeing and experiencing, that in me dwells no good Thing, and that I deserve nothing but Death, and eternal Damnation, by reason of my continual Sins, Wanderings and Desertions; and feeling that all my Righteousness is but as filthy Rags stain'd with Sin, I embrace, by Faith, eternal Happiness by *Jesus Christ* my sweet *Saviour*, seeking in him alone my Life and Blessedness, embracing by Faith the Promises of God, which are Faithfulness itself, being *Yea* and *Amen* in *Christ Jesus*; and feeling from time to time, the infinite Power of his precious Blood, that he spilt upon the Cross at *Jerusalem*, I rejoice with Joy unspeakable and full of Glory, being sure that he who has called me, is also faithful, who having begun in my Heart, the Work of his Grace and infinite Love, will carry it on to the Coming of *Christ*. 'Tis a faithful Saying, (I say with *St. Paul*) and worthy of all Acceptation, that *Christ* died for Sinners, of whom I am Chief, as thou that readest mayst see by what I have above written. What I desire now is, to experience from Day to Day, and from Moment to Moment, the powerful Efficacy of *Christ's* glorious Resurrection, that as he has died for my Sins, I also may die to my Sin, and rise again with him to Newness of Life, by Faith which is in his Name. And thus, stripping myself of the Affections of the World, and laying aside the Sin that does so easily beset me, I run with Patience the Race that is set before me, looking unto *Jesus*, the Author and Finisher of my Faith, to the End I may receive

receive out of his Fulness Grace for Grace, till I end
my Pilgrimage in his Glory who hath called me by *Christ*
Jesus.

Now unto the Great God, who is the Father of Mercy,
and abundant in Goodness, and whose Compassion never fails;
even unto him, who hath wash'd me, and redeemed me, by
the Blood of the Cross, be Glory for ever and for ever-
more. *Amen.*

F I N I S.



